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AGAM-P (M) (24 Apr 67)

(19)

OT-RD-66X235

28 April 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report, Lessons Learned, Headquarters,
2d Battalion, 27th Infantry (The Wolfhounds)
(Operation ATTLEBORO) [27.8]

(11)
24 Nov 66

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

(12) 31p.

1. Forwarded as inclosure is Combat Operations After Action
report (Operation ATTLEBORO) conducted by Headquarters 2D Battalion
27th Infantry (The WOLFHOOUNDS). Information contained in this report
should be evaluated by CDC in accordance with paragraph 6f of AR 1-19 and
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future from lessons learned during current operations, and may be adapted
for use in developing training material.

BY THE ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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for period ending 24 Nov 66.

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(Continued on page 2)

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HEADQUARTERS
2D BATTALION 27TH INFANTRY
(THE WOLFHOUSES)
APO 96225

AVDCSBC-T

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS MACV T3-32)

THRU: Commanding Officer
2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division
APO 96225

Commanding General
25th Infantry Division
APO 96225

TO: Commander
U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
ATTN: J343
APO US Forces 96243

Reference:

- a. OPORD 40-66 (Operation ATTLEBORO), Headquarters, 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, 14 Nov 66.
- b. OPORD 61-66 (Operation ATTLEBORO), Headquarters, 2d Battalion 27th Infantry, 15 Nov 66.

1. NAME OR IDENTITY AND/OR TYPE OF OPERATION.

- a. Operation ATTLEBORO.
- b. Search and Destroy.

2. DATES OF OPERATION. 040001 Nov 66 through 252400 Nov 66.

3. LOCATION. DINH DUONG TAY NINH Province, reference map, Vietnam 1:25,000, series 8020, sheets 6232 III NS, 6231 IV NS, 6232 I S, 6232 II NS, 6132 II NS.

4. CONTROL HEADQUARTERS. The control headquarters for the battalion during the combat phase of the operation was the 196th Light Infantry Brigade. 2d Battalion 27th Infantry returned to 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division control 111800 Nov 66.

5. REPORTING OFFICER. LTC Henry R. Shelton.

6. TASK ORGANIZATION.

Co A, 2/27

Co B, 2/27

Co C, 2/27

Bn Control

Recon Platoon

Security Platoon

4.2 Mortar Platoon

Ground Surveillance Section

HHC Elements

Medical Platoon

Scout Dog Platoon

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEARS INTERVALS
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7. SUPPORTING FORCES.

a. Air Support: The tactical air support used by 2d Battalion 27th Infantry was planned and coordinated by higher headquarters. No free strike zone was allocated the battalion and when tactical air was used it was on an immediate basis.

b. Aviation Support: Only during the initial movement to contact was aviation support used in its tactical role. The majority of the time aircraft were used for daily resupply missions originating in TAY NINH.

During the action, elements of numerous aviation companies were used. In every instance these units performed in an excellent manner. Resupply missions were accomplished with speed and efficiency. Medical evacuation of wounded and dead during the action was satisfactorily accomplished.

The use of gunships was limited to two factors: First, the closeness of enemy to friendly forces and secondly, the nature of the terrain. All of the fighting was accomplished under a dense jungle canopy with no definable terrain features.

c. Artillery:

(1) Composition: Batteries A and C, 1st Battalion 8th Artillery, 3rd Battalion, 82nd Artillery, and organic indirect support weapons of 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry. The batteries were so positioned to allow maximum coverage of the areas of operation at all times.

(2) The missions fired were distributed between fire on suspected and known VC locations, reconnaissance by fire, harassing and interdiction fires, and marking missions. Preparations were fired on landing zones and suppressive fires were used during extractions. These suppressive fires were highly successful on all extractions due to the prior coordination that guaranteed safe air corridors and uninterrupted artillery fires.

(3) The surveillance of the forward observers was augmented by forward air controllers and the Artillery Liaison Officer who was observing from a command and control aircraft.

8. INTELLIGENCE.

Several factors appear to have prompted the 9th VC Division to seek battle in the area west of DAU TIENG. The loss of approximately 1000 tons of rice which was captured by the 196th Light Infantry Brigade, and the impending invasion of what was apparently an enemy base area complex vicinity XT 4257 undoubtedly contributed to the enemy's decision to fight. From all observations the concentration of most of the 9th VC Division in an area between DAU TIENG and TAY NINH was preplanned and not primarily in response to US operations.

Based on a study of documents captured on the battlefield, US units appear to have been in contact, vicinity XT 4254, with the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 273rd VC Regiment and the 095 Company which is the recon company of the 9th VC Division. It is quite possible that elements of the 271st VC Regiment were also deployed in the same general area.

9. MISSION.

The mission of the battalion changed several times during the reporting period. After the action of 4-5 Nov the battalion was reaction

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force for the 1st Infantry Division. Then the battalion was reaction force of 25th Infantry Division. Finally control was reverted to 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division where the battalion secured artillery bases, made combat assaults, and acted as reaction force for the brigade.

10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION. 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry prepares to:

- a. Be attached to higher headquarters conducting operations in War Zone C.
- b. Defend forward base camps.
- c. Provide a reaction force for elements operating in War Zone C.
- d. Conduct reconnaissance in force operations.
- e. Secure fire support bases for artillery units.
- f. Conduct search and destroy operations.
- g. 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry TAC SOP applies.

11. EXECUTION.

General: At 1620 hrs, 3 November, the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry was informed by 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division that the battalion was under operational control of the 196th Brigade and to begin movement to DAU TIENG (XT 4947) as soon as possible (see Annex A, Appendix 1). At that time, battalion headquarters and Company B were involved in an operation in the vicinity of DUC HANH "B" (XT 5707). Co C was manning the perimeter of 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry at the CU CHI base camp. Co A was immediately ordered to the airfield for helicopter transport to DAU TIENG. The 2d Brigade S3 specified that one rifle company and a battalion headquarters element were to be moved on 3 Nov, one more rifle company to be moved at first light on 4 Nov and third rifle company to be moved on order. At 1800 hrs 3 Nov an advance party consisting of the battalion commander, the S3 Air and Co A CO was flown to DAU TIENG. Co A closed DAU TIENG 031930 Nov. The battalion S3, S2, and Artillery Liaison Officer arrived DAU TIENG 032000 Nov after having closed the battalion (-) at CU CHI base camp and briefed them on the current situation. The battalion CO reported to the CG, 196th Brigade and was given the mission of base camp reaction force and reserve for the 196th Bde elements that had been committed in the vicinity of the SAIGON River. The battalion CP was located with the CP of 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry.

4 November 1966:

On the morning of 4 Nov, a reconnaissance of DAU TIENG base camp was conducted to determine counter-attack routes and blocking positions. By 1000 hrs, the battalion received three CH-47 loads of personnel and equipment consisting of one section (two tubes) of the 4.2 Mortar Platoon, a CP group with a 3/4 ton truck, Co C mess and a radio jeep. However, no ammunition resupply or water cans were received; the second rifle company had not arrived; the S4 and S1 sections had not arrived, and sufficient map coverage for the battalion was not available.

Co C began arriving from CU CHI at 1100 hrs by UH1D helicopter. At 1215 hrs the battalion was ordered by the 196th Brigade to secure a disabled helicopter at BEN CUI airstrip at (XT 445155). At 1230 hrs Co A arrived at the downed helicopter and began receiving sporadic sniper fire, rifle grenades, and 60mm mortar fire. At 1246 hrs, with Co A still at the downed helicopter, the 196th Brigade ordered the battalion to alert Co C for possible commitment to an area of enemy contact at XT 4153 or to assist Co A. Co C moved to the airstrip to await commitment and the battalion CO and S3 returned from the

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BEN CUI Airstrip to the DAU TIENG Airstrip.

At 1420 hrs the CO, 196th Brigade briefed the CO, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry at the DAU TIENG Airstrip. TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry was in heavy contact with an unknown size VC force in the vicinity of XT 415538. The battalion CO was ordered to conduct an air assault at XT 407537 with Co C and a Command Group and link up with the left flank of TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry as soon as possible. The battalion CO requested that Co A be extracted first and both Co C and A with battalion headquarters be put in to assist TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry. This request was denied and the battalion CO briefed the Co C commander. At 1440 hrs Co C departed for the LZ at XT 407537. Co C landed and received no hostile fire on the LZ. The battalion CO joined Co C on the ground and the company started moving from XT 408539 into the dense jungle to the northeast. At 1500 hrs, under control of the battalion S3, Co A was extracted from the downed helicopter location and returned to DAU TIENG. Co A was alerted to stand by for possible commitment. At this time the CO, TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry reported 8 KIA and 23 WIA in the vicinity of XT 411538, he stated that most of the casualties were from machinegun positions concealed in the dense jungle. The TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry consisted of Headquarters, Co A, Co C 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, Co C 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, Co B and C 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry. CO, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry contacted the S3, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry who was flying in a command and control helicopter overhead. Both agreed that this would be the time to have Co A on the ground and ready for action. The S3, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry contacted the 196th Brigade and requested movement of Co A and a battalion CP group to the area of operation. The request was denied. At approximately 1515 hrs, the CO 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry contacted CO, TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry by radio, they agreed that Co C 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry would attempt to roll up the flank of the VC position. Co C began moving toward the sound of firing along the front of the TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry. The terrain was dense jungle and it took almost two and one half hours for Co C to reach the VC position. In the meantime, Co A had been committed by the 196th Brigade, and had landed vicinity XT 407537 at 1600 hrs. The CO and S3, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry had agreed by radio to put Co A on the LZ vicinity XT 407537 and move them to the east to link up with TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry from the left rear in order to assist TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry in the evacuation of the many casualties the TF was receiving. This employment of Co A was chosen by CO, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry because Co C was well into the dense jungle in front of TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, and the possibility of linking Co A and C before darkness was remote. At approximately 1715 hrs Co C contacted the VC force. The CO of Co C was killed shortly after contact with the VC. CPT Currier had come forward to locate the enemy machinegun position; he had organized an attack on the position and was killed assaulting a bunker. Lt McDougal assumed command and at approximately 1745 hrs an assault on the VC position was made. The assault was repulsed with at least 7 men killed. It was determined that the VC position consisted of a series of concealed bunkers interconnected by trenches. Extending from the bunker apertures were fire lanes that were barely visible in the jungle. These lanes provided the machinegunner with a field of fire of 100 to 150 meters. The attacker could not tell where the fire lanes were located, unless he was standing in them. Many lanes in the bunker complex were interlocking (see Annex A, Appendix 2).

Co C attempted to retrieve its dead and wounded personnel. During this time, firing was going on at the Co C position and all along the TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry lines. The CO, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry threw a smoke grenade and a smoke grenade was thrown in the TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry lines. The CO, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry was informed by the FIC that the Co C position was only 100 meters from TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry lines through dense jungle. At approximately 1800 hrs, the CO, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry took one squad and attempted to gain contact with

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TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, he crossed a fire lane and was taken under machinegun fire, he assaulted the bunker and was killed. Two attempts to retrieve his body failed. The TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry made two attempts during the evening to gain contact with Co C. Both attempts failed and incurred many casualties. At 2130 hrs the S3, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry contacted the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry forward CP at DAU TIENG and requested clarification from 196th Brigade as to his status as acting CO, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry. He was informed that the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry was not attached to TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, but was expected to coordinate all actions with the CO, TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry. Co C was told to form a tight perimeter for the night and informed that Co A would be sent to gain contact with them on the morning of 5 November. There was intermittent grenade exchanges and firing throughout the night.

Co B, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry had arrived at DAU TIENG on 4 Nov at 1700 hrs. The 2d Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division arrived at DAU TIENG and assumed operational control of Co B for the purpose of the defense of DAU TIENG.

During the night of 4-5 Nov, Co A, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry assisted in the evacuation of casualties of TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry and established a perimeter defense around the LZ located at XT 410537. Resupply had been accomplished before dark. One LZ was used for elements of four battalions with no centralized control. This resulted in excessive confusion, loss of time, and loss of equipment by all units. At dawn of 5 Nov the S3, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry and the CO of Co A accomplished the coordination for a passage of lines and reconnaissance of the forward lines of TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry. A recommendation was made by the front line units as to the best route to use in getting to Co C. Co A moved forward to attempt to link up with Co C. After moving forward 30 meters they came under heavy machine gun fire. Three men were killed and several wounded. The three KIA were lying near a VC bunker. At this time it was obvious that there was a VC bunker complex between Co A and Co C. Co A laid down a base of fire and attempted to maneuver personnel against the bunkers. When the VC opened fire the maneuver personnel immediately assaulted the enemy bunkers. Three bunkers were overrun and one trench was crossed. The company commander was wounded, but refused evacuation. Co A was receiving intense fire from fortified bunkers just beyond the ones that had been overrun. Co A sustained 7 KIA and several WIA from the action. Trying to reach some of the KIA, others were wounded. S3, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry instructed Co A CO to lay down a heavy base of fire and evacuate the wounded and equipment and leave the dead for later evacuation in order to prevent further casualties. TF 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry was moving toward Co C from the northeast and was only 400 meters away. TF 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry consisted of HQ, Companies A, B, C of 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry, Co B 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry and Co A 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry.

5 November 1966:

Major Shelton, the newly appointed CO of the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry arrived with the CO of the 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division at the CP of TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry at 0930 hrs. The S3, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry returned through friendly lines and moved down the trail to the TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry CP. He briefed the new CO and it was agreed to evacuate the Co A wounded and those dead that could be reached and to withdraw Co A. Co A began evacuation of the wounded and dead under the cover of its own fire. After the evacuation, Co A began its withdrawal under the cover of fire provided by TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry. By 1000 hrs, Co A completed its withdrawal through TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry lines. Ten of the Co A dead could not be reached because of the intensity of enemy fire. During the withdrawal Co A counted 22 enemy dead in the overrun enemy bunkers and trenches and 2 snipers who had been shot out of the trees.

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The CO, TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry made radio contact with CO, TF 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry and through the use of smoke spotted by a FAC above the position, the CO, TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry guided TF 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry elements toward Co C. At 1010 hrs, elements of TF 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry reached a position within 200 meters of Co C position. At 1003 hrs, CG, 196th Brigade ordered Co B, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry to the area of operation. From 0950 hrs until 1500 hrs the VC made four probes of the lines of TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, each was repulsed. From 0800 until 1020 hrs, the VC had been probing the Co C position with fire. Strict fire discipline was used by Co C and evidently the VC force decided that the American unit had no ammunition left. At 1020 hrs a VC force began walking cautiously forward toward Co C. The company held its fire until the enemy was within 30 meters of their position, then opened fire and the VC force was quickly cut down.

At 1055 hrs, Co A, 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry, a part of TF 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry contacted Co C. The Co C perimeter had 21 VC bodies around it. The perimeter was still under fire and two bodies including that of the CO, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry could not be evacuated. TF 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry began probing the VC positions and came under heavy fire and received casualties. At approximately 1200 hrs, the CG, 196th Brigade ordered the withdrawal of all units to subject the VC positions to heavy artillery bombardment and airstrikes. Co B, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry arrived at the CP of the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry at 1200 hrs. Co B secured the LZ and was alerted for possible commitment to the front. All during the afternoon, firefights broke out at several locations along the lines.

At 1515 hrs, the CO, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry received orders to extract the battalion by helicopter to DAU TIENG, after the extraction of the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry to TAY NINH. Each company received instructions from the CO, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry. Co A was ordered to assist in the handling of the Co C wounded and dead. Co B was ordered to secure the PZ. Co C would be reorganized and accounted for and the new commander (CPT STOREY) placed in command immediately upon its movement through the friendly lines.

Co C, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry and TF 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry reached TF 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry lines at 1530 hrs. They had carried out 6 dead and 19 wounded from Co C alone. Evacuation of the dead and wounded began immediately. By 1800 hrs the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry was moved to a PZ and extracted to DAU TIENG.

6 November 1966:

The VC bunker complex was subjected to artillery and airstrikes. At 1200 hrs 6 Nov, Co A, 2d Battalion, 23rd Infantry moved into the VC position and retrieved all the bodies and equipment of the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry. The VC had withdrawn leaving many of their own as well as all the US weapons. The 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry was attached to the 1st Infantry Division on 6 Nov.

During the day the company commanders and platoon leaders conducted a reconnaissance of counter-attack and blocking positions in the DAU TIENG base camp. Coordination was made with the 3rd Battalion, 8th ARVN Regiment for patrolling. The battalion was alerted for possible deployment in a forward area of contact vicinity XT 423578. Deployment was not made and the battalion continued to improve the defensive positions occupied. Maintenance

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of weapons and equipment was stressed by the commanders. During the hours of darkness passive security measures were taken. Ambush sites were established on likely enemy avenues of approach to the perimeter.

7 November 1966:

The battalion continued to occupy and improve the defensive positions. During the morning 12 replacements were received for Companies A and C, respectively. A liaison officer from the battalion moved to the CP of the 2d Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division. Patrolling coordination was made with the 3rd Battalion, 8th ARVN Regiment. Passive security measures in addition to ambush patrolling was initiated to deny the VC access to the perimeter. The VC had command detonated 1 claymore on the Co B perimeter. No casualties were sustained and M-79 fire was directed at the suspected location of the enemy.

8 November 1966:

At 0930 hrs a sweep of the battalion perimeter revealed the position from which the claymore had been detonated the previous night. The protective wire had been cut in two places. At this location 1 complete VC claymore mine was found that had failed to detonate. This mine was evacuated through intelligence channels to 25th Infantry Division headquarters at CU CHI.

The battalion was notified by 2d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division to be on a one hour alert for possible movement to assist the 1st and 2d Battalions 28th Infantry. The battalion was not deployed. At 1600 hrs the CG, 25th Infantry Division ordered the CO, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry to move to TAY NINH base camp on 9 Nov. Detachment from 2d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division and the return of control to 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division was to be effective upon closure at the TAY NINH base camp.

9 November 1966:

The battalion began movement to TAY NINH base camp at 0900 hrs. All elements had closed at 1600 hrs. Upon arrival at TAY NINH the battalion was placed under operational control of the 196th Brigade for base camp defense. Coordination was made and the battalion was quartered in the 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry billets.

10 November 1966:

A recon was made of the TAY NINH base camp by the company commanders and platoon leaders. The location of bunkers and counter-attack positions were reconnoitered. Coordination with the 196th Light Infantry Brigade and supporting artillery was made. At 1500 hrs the battalion was ordered by the CG, 25th Infantry Division to make a recon in force from XT 297497 to XT 322470 and return (see Annex A, Appendix 3). Co B moved by truck from the base camp to XT 297497. After detrucking Co B moved south of the road to XT 322470. At 1730 hrs, after making no contact, Co B was ordered to return north of the road to the entrucking point at XT 297497. Co B entrucked and returned to the TAY NINH base camp at 1848 hrs.

11 November 1966:

The battalion continued defense of the TAY NINH base camp. At 0900 hrs an order was received to displace the battalion in an administrative move to the 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division base camp located at XT 275685. Movement was to begin 120700. Preparation for the move began immediately.

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At 2130 hrs the TAY NINH base camp was subjected to a VC mortar attack consisting of 81 and 82mm mortars. Approximately 20 rounds fell in the 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry area where this battalion was quartered. Co C, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry received 4 light casualties who were evacuated to the base camp hospital. Counter-mortar fires were effected and damage to the battalion was light.

12 November 1966:

Movement to the 2d Brigade forward base, vicinity XT 275685 began at 0730 hrs (see Annex A, Appendix 4). Movement was completed at 1600 hrs. Reconnaissance of the battalion area was made, defensive positions were prepared, and night outposts were positioned. No contact was made during the reporting period.

13 November 1966:

The 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry continued to man a portion of the 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division base camp. During the day 2 observation posts were established by Co's A and C. The companies continued to fortify their defensive positions and clear fields of fire. Resupply aircraft moved needed supplies to a forward supply base established in the perimeter.

During the night approximately 7 rounds of rifle grenade fire was received on the Co C perimeter, no casualties. Illumination missions were fired in an attempt to locate the position of the VC. H & I fires were fired throughout the night by the battalion's 4.2 Platoon. Night ambushes were established by the Recon Platoon and a platoon of Co B. No contact was made but both patrols heard movement and voices which were countered with mortar and artillery fires.

14 November 1966:

The battalion continued to man a portion of the 2d Brigade forward base. Further improvement of the defensive positions was made. The CO, 2d Battalion 27th Infantry received the mission to move the battalion to fire support base #2 vicinity XT 2686 on 15 Nov. Preparations began immediately.

During the night the VC again harassed the battalion perimeter this time directing their fires to the Co B perimeter. The enemy fire was countered with indirect fires. No casualties were sustained from the 6 rounds of rifle grenade fire. Co's A and C established ambushes but no contact was made.

15 November 1966:

The battalion moved to fire support base #2 vicinity XT 2686 (see Annex A, Appendix 5A). The advance party departed the base camp at 1030 hrs and the main body departed at 1200 hrs. Immediately upon reaching the new base camp a thorough search of the battalion perimeter was conducted. Upon completion of the sweep the building of defensive positions began. The 4.2 Mortar Platoon and resupplies began movement to the forward position at 1330 hrs. Upon closing, the firing positions were established and registration completed. A forward supply base was established and the supplies moved to the new location.

During the night the companies established LP/OP's. No sightings or hearings were made.

16 November 1966:

2d Battalion, 27th Infantry continued to fortify the defensive positions established 15 Nov. Command emphasis was placed on overhead cover and fields

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of fire. Each company had teams to cut and mark routes for resupply and evacuation if needed during the night. The indirect fire weapons continued to add concentrations to the fire support plan while conducting training.

During the night Co's B and C established LP/OP's in their respective sectors. No sightings or hearings were made.

17 November 1966:

At 0800 hrs Co B began a sweep of the area adjacent to the battalion perimeter. No contact or enemy activity was observed and the company returned at 1130 hrs. Upon the return of Co B, Co A departed for their sweep. No contact was made and Co A returned to friendly front lines at 1330 hrs. Co C departed for a sweep at 1400 hrs. No contact was made and return to friendly front lines was completed at 1620 hrs.

At 1525 hrs the Recon Platoon departed friendly front lines. No contact was made and the Recon Platoon returned at 1555 hrs. During the sweeps the commanders integrated training with the combat mission and practiced jungle tactics oriented to the terrain (see Annex A, Appendix 6).

Ambush points were established by Companies A, B, and C. No contact was made and all ambush points had returned to friendly front lines at 0648 hrs.

18 November 1966:

On 18 Nov the battalion had the mission of securing the brigade perimeter, outposting the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry perimeter prior to its move on a combat assault (see Annex A, Appendix 5B). Security positions were established by Co A at XT 270856, XT 274858, and XT 275861; Security Platoon XT 276858; and the Recon Platoon at XT 272866. Co B was on 1-hour notice for reinforcing elements of the 2d Brigade. The move of the 1st Battalion 27th Infantry was completed at 1125 hrs.

Co C (-) conducted a sweep at 1127 hrs (see Annex A, Appendix 7). No contact was made and the company (-) returned to friendly front lines at 1220 hrs.

Mortar crew and FO training was conducted during the day, supervised by the artillery liaison officer and the battalion 4.2 Platoon Leader.

19 November 1966:

Co A conducted a sweep of the area adjacent their perimeter commencing at 1015 hrs (see Annex A, Appendix 8). The Co A commander used the sweep as a training vehicle for training the replacements in jungle tactics and formations. The sweep was completed at 1410 hrs, no contact was made.

Ambush points were established on the perimeter by Co B and the Security Platoon, no contact was made.

20 November 1966:

Co C conducted a sweep beginning at 0900 hrs (see Annex A, Appendix 9). During the sweep Co C destroyed 1 VC structure, 1 lean-to and a tunnel vicinity XT 275875. 1 French type radio transmitter beyond repair was found vicinity XT 274879 and evacuated through intelligence channels. The sweep was completed at 1235 hrs.

Ambush points were established by Co A at XT 260861 and the Security Platoon at XT 267868, no contact was made.

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21 November 1966:

The sweeps scheduled were cancelled (see Annex A, Appendix 10). The battalion outposted the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry lines while they conducted an operation. The outpost were established and in position at 1030 hrs. At 1023 hrs a report was received of small arms being fired at an aircraft from XT 276865. The 3rd platoon of Co C was dispatched to check the area. The sweep revealed negative results and returned to base camp at 1350 hrs.

Three airstrikes were conducted under the control of 2d Brigade vicinity coordinates XT 276871, XT 257865, and XT 257851. Elements manning the perimeter marked with smoke and the airstrikes were completed.

During the night the VC mortared the perimeter. At 0200 hrs the first rounds began hitting in the perimeter. A complete report revealed 31 rounds had hit within the battalion perimeter. One person was slightly injured but did not require evacuation. At the report of incoming rounds the 81mm and 4.2 mortars began firing on suspected VC locations. The small scale attack lasted only 5 minutes and no other incidents occurred during the night.

22 November 1966:

The plan for the day was to conduct a combat assault vicinity XT 278859 to obtain an engineer analysis of a bridge site (see Annex A, Appendix 11). Co A would combat assault into LZ 2 and secure position ALPHA. On order Co A would move to the bridge site with an engineer representative and conduct the analysis. Co B would combat assault into LZ 1 and secure position BRAVO. Co C would combat assault and secure position CHARLIE and cover the flank of Co A as it approached the bridge site. The mission of the Recon Platoon was to secure the CP group after landing on LZ 1.

1st Battalion, 27th Infantry outposted the battalion perimeter during the operation. The Security Platoon manned the Recon Platoon position.

At 0845 hrs, the combat assault began with Co B making the initial assault. The LZ's were cold and Companies A and C and the Recon Platoon followed. All lifts were on the ground at 0925 hrs. While securing and searching position CHARLIE Co C located and destroyed 900 pounds of rice vicinity XT 379856 (see Annex A, Appendix 11). The Recon Platoon located freshly dug holes, fighting positions, and footprints. The holes had possibly been dug for AT mines but none were located. After completing the mission the elements prepared for extraction. Closein artillery fires were placed around the PZ and two airstrikes were conducted in conjunction with the extraction. The order of departure was the same as that of entry and on the last lift of Co B automatic weapons fire was received from XT 379861. Upon return Co A (-) conducted a short sweep to XT 258864. No contact was made and Co A (-) returned to base camp at 1705 hrs.

Ambush sites were established by the Security Platoon and Co B. No contact was made and the patrols returned at 0705 hrs.

23 November 1966:

The battalion again outposted the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry lines while they were conducting an operation away from base camp. The companies occupied the former position that were used in the previous outposting mission. The Recon Platoon conducted a sweep beginning at 1407 hrs (see Annex A, Appendix 12). The Recon Platoon made a reconnaissance by fire and employed jungle tactics through the dense foliage. At 1540 hrs two bombs that had failed to detonate were located XT 257868. The bombs were later

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destroyed by an EOD team. The Recon Platoon returned at 1640 hrs.

During the afternoon the alert to move to CU CHI the following morning was received. Materials not needed were evacuated and carried to TAY NINH during the late afternoon.

Ambush sites were established by Co A and the Security Platoon. No contact was made and the patrols returned at 0718 hrs.

24 November 1966:

The plan for the day was to move all equipment and personnel to CU CHI. All supplies were loaded on helicopters and carried to TAY NINH for link up with a convoy. Persons not needed were sent to TAY NINH to facilitate the unloading and loading of the equipment. All items not returned were destroyed and the area policed at 0900 hrs. Positions were established and the companies were given their order of movement. The move began at 1245 hrs. Artillery fires were directed to the area south of the PZ and airstrikes were used in the area to the north. The aircraft made the extraction from east to west. The first elements extracted were carried to the base camp of 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry (Mechanized). After the tactical extraction was complete the battalion was shuttled to CU CHI in helicopters. All elements had closed at 1800 hrs.

12. RESULTS.

a. Friendly: 74 personnel were casualties (27 KIA and 47 WIA (see Annex B).

b. Enemy:

(1) Personnel:

45 VC KIA (BC)

(2) Items destroyed:

900 pounds of rice
4 VC structures
1 loan-to
1 tunnel
1 ranch radio beyond repair

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS.

a. Supply:

CLASS I: Normal daily resupply was conducted in the battalion area of the Division Base camp. All mess halls were closed down with the exception of Co C which fed all stay back personnel in the battalion. When the battalion closed into the airstrip at DAU TIENG Co A's mess hall, supplemented by cooks from all other messes, was sent forward to the airstrip and subsequently fed two hot meals daily (supper, breakfast). At DAU TIENG, Class I support came both from CU CHI and the 8th Support Battalion located at DAU TIENG. Initially the items forwarded from CU CHI were ice, water, canned goods and some perishables. Accountability for A rations or C rations or was not required of this battalion. In the latter days at DAU TIENG all Class I support came from the 8th Support Battalion.

When the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry moved to TAY NINH base camp, the battalion was attached to the 196th Light Infantry Brigade and all Class I

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support came from the 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry. Rations were prepared in the Co A and Co B, 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry mess halls by mess personnel of this battalion, (2d Battalion, 27th Infantry). Three hot meals were served daily at this location.

When the battalion moved forward into fire support base #1, no mess hall accompanied the battalion. Temporary field mess facilities were established in the 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry area and the supper meal was prepared and forwarded daily to the battalion. In fire support base #1 the meal was fed in one central location for all units. Mess equipment was extracted the following morning. Water was forwarded daily to the fire support base from the TAY NINH base camp. Ice was unavailable. Supplementary packets were available and were sent forward on a daily basis.

The last forward move was to fire support base #2. The mess facilities remained in TAY NINH staffed by personnel from all units of the battalion. A change was initiated and the dinner meal was forwarded daily. Dinner was served in each of the companies respective CP areas simultaneously to insure greater security, efficiency of serving, and to permit extraction of mess equipment prior to darkness. It had been learned from the initial fire support base that the feeding of the supper meal interfered with operational requirements at dusk. Ice, water, and supplementary packets were available and were resupplied on a daily basis. At all times a one days C-ration was on hand for emergency use. On the final day of the operation, 24 November the Thanksgiving Feast was served to everyone upon their return to CU CHI.

CLASS II - IV: During the initial phases of the action much equipment transferred hands due to operational necessity. Consequently, upon the completion of the operation a long list of missing equipment has turned up. Many rifles and other items of equipment remained with the friendly casualties and were returned to 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry S-4 through normal supply channels. In that initially many personnel were treated at TAY NINH, during the latter days of ATTLEBORO thorough checks revealed that weapons belonging to this unit were in the supply channels of the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, as well as the 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry.

These weapons and items of equipment have been retrieved and items in our supply channels, not belonging to this battalion, have been returned to owning units if located. All units from this battalion have at this time submitted the proper paperwork on their respective combat losses incurred during this operation.

Items of Class II - IV supplied throughout the operation included the following:

1. Sandbags	60,000
2. 8' fence posts	400 (limited use only)
3. Chain saws	5
4. Fatigues	150 pairs
5. Socks	1360 pairs
6. Underwear	750 sets
7. Boots	25 pairs
8. Mosquito repellent	2000 bottles
9. Foot powder	1000 cans
10. Water purification tablets	2000 bottles
11. Air mattresses	180
12. Poncho	140
13. Flashlights	105
14. PRC-25 batteries	24 cases
15. Shovels	75
16. Marker balloons	12

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17. Machetes	100
18. Concertina	8 1/2 rolls
19. Pack boards	70 (on call TN)
20. Mine detector	1 (on call TN)
21. Flamethrowers	3 (on call TN)
22. Leather gloves	50 pair

At the TAY NINH supply base two A-22 Bags were secured and prepared for emergency resupply. They were packed with water and the "Night Kit" and were immediately available for sling load by UH1D Helicopter. This pre-packaged load had the capability of being dropped from the air at tree top or higher level into inaccessible jungle terrain.

CLASS III: (Total consumption)

1. Mogas	4,900 gallons
2. Diesel	5,600 gallons
3. Oil 30%	135 gallons

CLASS V: During the initial phase of the operation when the battalion was in contact with enemy units, class V was resupplied from CU CHI to DAU TIENG Airstrip. Large stocks were forwarded and kept on hand at DAU TIENG to facilitate further resupply of the forward line units. Standard night kits were flown in initially to be followed by the larger bulk quantities of ammunition. Units at DAU TIENG were mutually supporting in areas where special ammunition was requested.

When the battalion moved to TAY NINH most of the ammunition was sent with the battalion, certain types and quantities were left at the airstrip for the incoming units. From this time on all ammunition requirements were obtained from the ASP of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade. All ammunition requested by the battalion while located in the two forward fire support bases was drawn from TAY NINH and forwarded to the battalion while located in the forward fire support bases. Ammunition stocks were cut to a minimum essential level in order to facilitate movement of the base and at the same time back up any emergency ammunition needs. Critical items and their respective basic loads maintained are indicated: 81mm HE 450-500 rounds, 4.2mm HE 250-300 rounds.

b. Maintenance: The heavily emphasized maintenance carried on during times when there was a minimum of vehicle use payed enormous dividends during Operation ATTLEBORO. Almost daily there was a requirement for vehicles to be used in convoys moving supplies to the TAY NINH base camp. The good condition of the vehicles prevented delays in the convoys because vehicle breakdowns were almost non-existent. The maintenance shop steadily improved the condition of the vehicles.

c. Treatment of Casualties; Evacuation and Hospitalization - The battalion aid station moved forward on the second day of the operation. Treatment of the casualties at all forward locations was done in an outstanding manner. Evacuation during 4-5 Nov was very slow due to the intensity of weapon fire and the terrain. Eventually the casualties were evacuated to 7th Surgical hospital at CU CHI, the 93rd evacuation hospital at BIEN HOA and the 3rd Field hospital at SAIGON. Accounting for the wounded was difficult due to numerous locations and time lapse during the evacuation.

d. Transportation: The battalion 2 1/2 ton trucks were used daily to support the entire operation. During the first few days their main function was to transport the resupply items of water, rations, and ammunition from the battalion area to the division resupply pad for the awaiting transportation. The only vehicles sent forward to DAU TIENG were HQ 6 and HQ 34.

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HQ 34 was utilized to haul supplies and HQ 6 was used for radio communications with the AN-GRC 46 radio. All vehicle transfer was by CH-47 (Chinook).

When the battalion was moved to TAY NINH many more vehicles conveyed to the TAY NINH base camp. These included the Support Platoon vehicles, mortar platoon vehicles, recon platoon vehicles, and several other 1/4 ton command vehicles.

Daily convoys were then initiated between CU CHI and TAY NINH to resupply necessary supplies and equipment to the S-4 representatives in TAY NINH. The final convoy was on 24 Nov which extracted all supplies, equipment and personnel of the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry from TAY NINH to the CU CHI base camp.

Resupply: In the initial stages of the operation all resupply came from CU CHI via CH-47 (Chinook). All resupply was initially limited to Class V and other classes of supplies were only forwarded after all units had fulfilled their daily Class V requirements. Approximately 3-5 sorties were scheduled and utilized by this battalion daily. The use of UH1D aircraft was limited and used only to a minimum extent.

When the battalion was moved to the two fire support bases all resupply was by UH1D aircraft. Fifteen to twenty sorties of water, rations, and ammunition were flown daily in support of this battalion. The move of the battalion from the first fire support base to the final base utilized 59 supply and mortar sorties. The final extraction to TAY NINH required some 25 sorties. Due to the extensive distance from CU CHI at no time was the "Buck Rogers Van" utilized. Throughout the operation three supply points were utilized. The first was that in CU CHI, the second in TAY NINH, and the third of 5 personnel was located with the battalion forward CP. Communications between the three points was limited to land line, which was separate but effective.

e. Communications:

(1) The primary means of communication was the AN PRC-25 with a jungle antenna. Numerous times transmission and reception was difficult due to the dense foliage. In static situations the AN PRC-25 was coupled with the RC-292 antenna to overcome the problems.

(2) A new radio AN/GRC-106 was installed on a battalion vehicle and moved to DAN TIENG Airstrip in the initial stages of the operation. The only problem was the use of qualified operators. The sensitivity of the set requires a person to continually operate it to get maximum efficiency. The elapse of time between operations necessitating the use of AN/GRC-106 allows the operator to become stale unless a small period of each day is spent operating the set.

(3) Land lines were used in static situations and some what relieved the problem of continuous radio use. In situations where aircraft are coming into and leaving the area the land line provides a more audible means of communication with ground elements. The commo platoon moved forward in the second day of the operation carrying with it a SB-22 that was in continuous operation throughout the operation.

14. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES.

On sweeps the companies employed jungle tactics as refresher training. The terrain where the battalion had previously operated was not conducive to jungle tactics and therefore the companies needed a refresher course consisting of formations and methods of movement.

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Using VC tactics, Co A built defensive positions that were highly sophisticated and extremely well camouflaged. Fire lanes that were interlocking were cut for approximately 75 meters from all bunkers. This provided excellent fields of fire and allowed maximum observation through the dense jungle.

15. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS.

The battalion in this action was pitted against a well armed, determined enemy occupying excellent defensive positions. The two most outstanding factors that dominated the events of this fight were the enemy's decision to hold his position and fight at close quarters for a sustained period, and the extraordinary degree of valor and courage shown by members of Companies A and C of this battalion.

It will probably never be known why the enemy decided to stand and fight in this instance instead of his usual tactic of breaking contact quickly and "fading" into the jungle. However, it may be assumed that because contact with US elements was made at so many different locations that the VC erroneously assumed that they were surrounded. It is interesting to note that documents found on the bodies of the VC at the scene of the battle h-5. Nov indicated that elements from two regiments of the 9th Division and the 9th Division Reconnaissance Company were involved in the fight.

It would be beneficial to examine the detrimental factors of the action in order to seek improvements and solutions. They were as follows:

- a. The inability to reconnoiter the VC positions without becoming engaged.
- b. The limited use of air and artillery fire power due to the closeness of the combatants.
- c. The piecemeal commitment of the battalion into the area of operation.
- d. The inability to reinforce Co C quickly because of the dense jungle.
- e. The lack of intelligence available to the battalion before and during the action.

This battalion has adopted the technique of employing scouts in advance of our units in dense jungle terrain. It is hoped that this technique will provide early warning to the main body and a degree of reconnaissance without decisive engagement. If this is successful the commander can withdraw and safely use artillery and air support on strong enemy positions before advancing again.

The problem of sustaining additional casualties while attempting to retrieve wounded was prevalent during this action. There is no good solution to this problem and in all cases it will be a matter of command judgment by the leader on the ground. It is easy to say that it should not happen, but the simple fact is that it does occur, and our leaders should be fully aware of the consequences of their decisions.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS.

- a. When intelligence is scanty but when it is known that a hardcore VC unit is located in dense jungle terrain, employ a battalion as a battalion, not by piecemeal commitment of individual companies.

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b. When a company or platoon is used alone in this terrain it must be in proximity to a suitable landing zone for rapid reinforcement.

c. Units should not attempt to link up with the flank of another element in the dense jungle. They should approach the unit from the rear and after link-up move laterally to the desired flank.

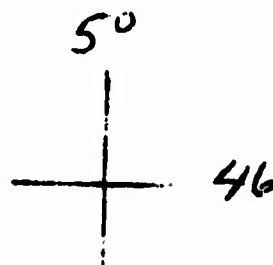
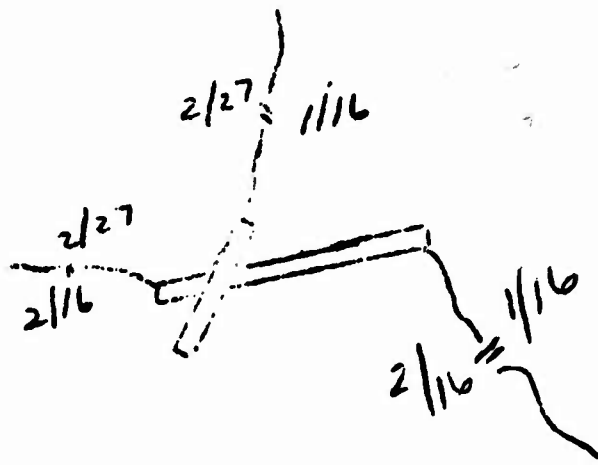
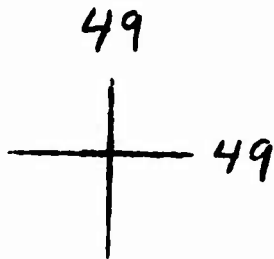
FOR THE COMMANDER:

Adolphus Henton

ADOLPHUS HENTON
CPT, Infantry
Adjutant

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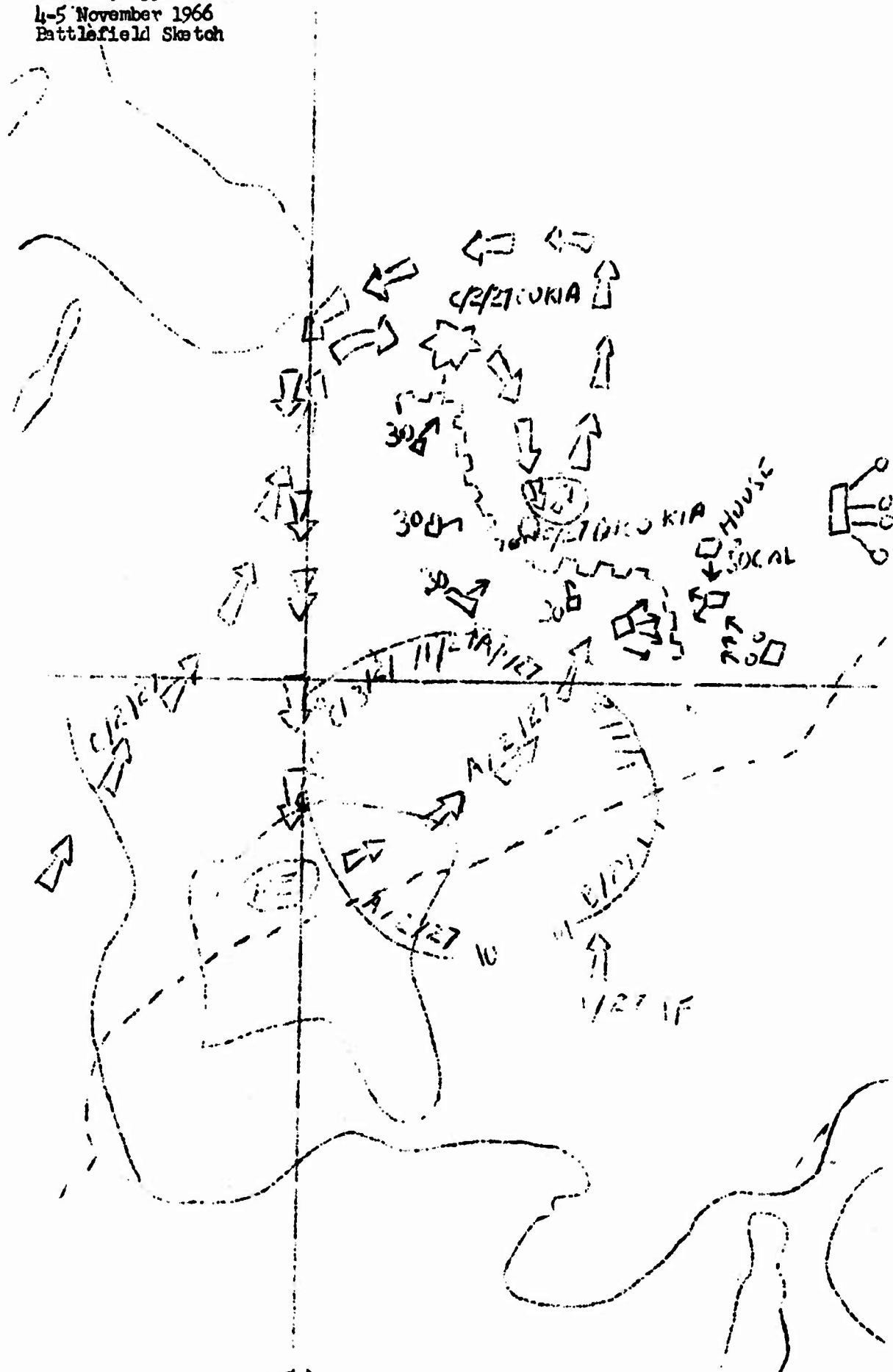
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Annex A, Appendix 2
4-5 November 1966
Battlefield Sketch



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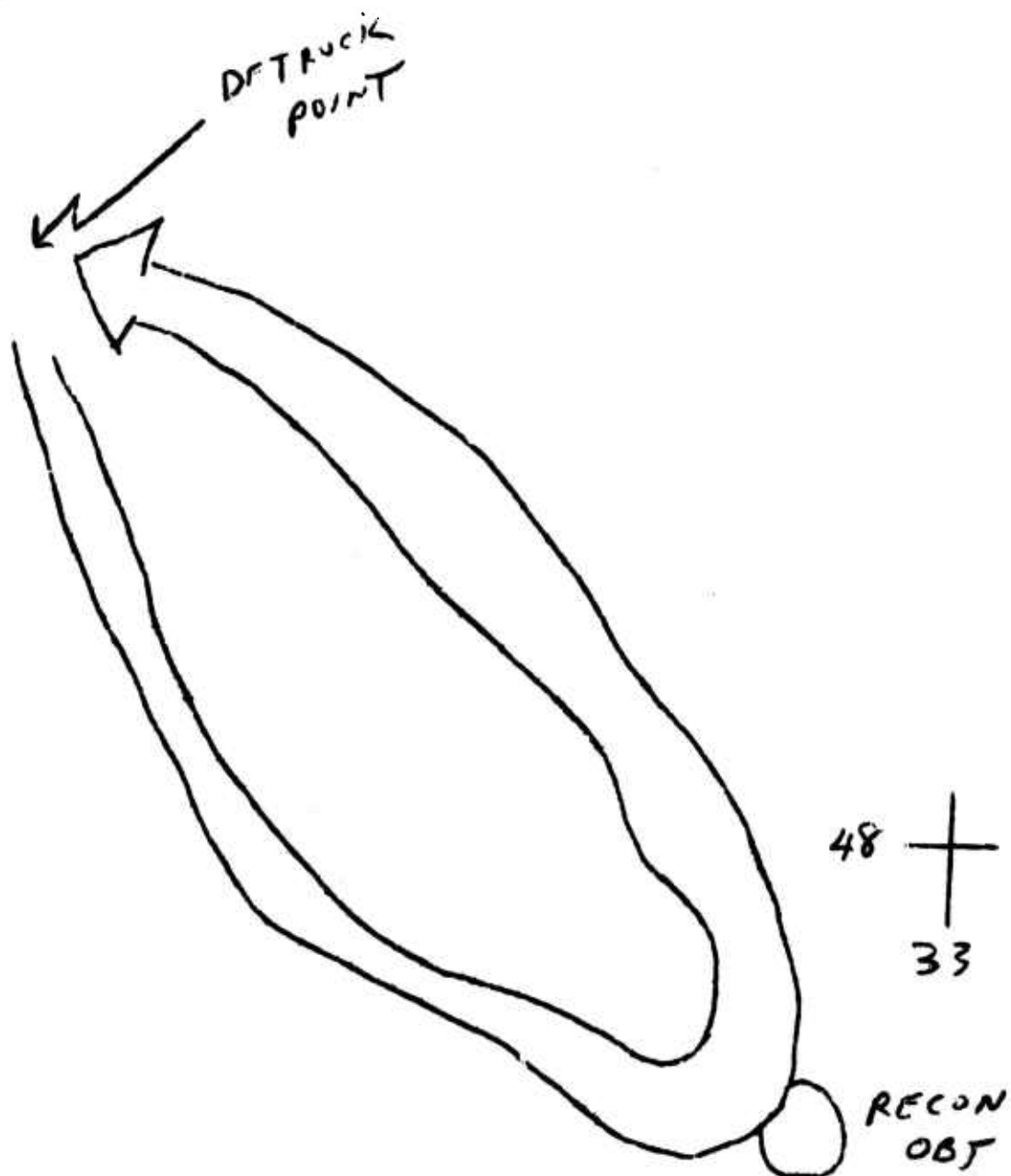
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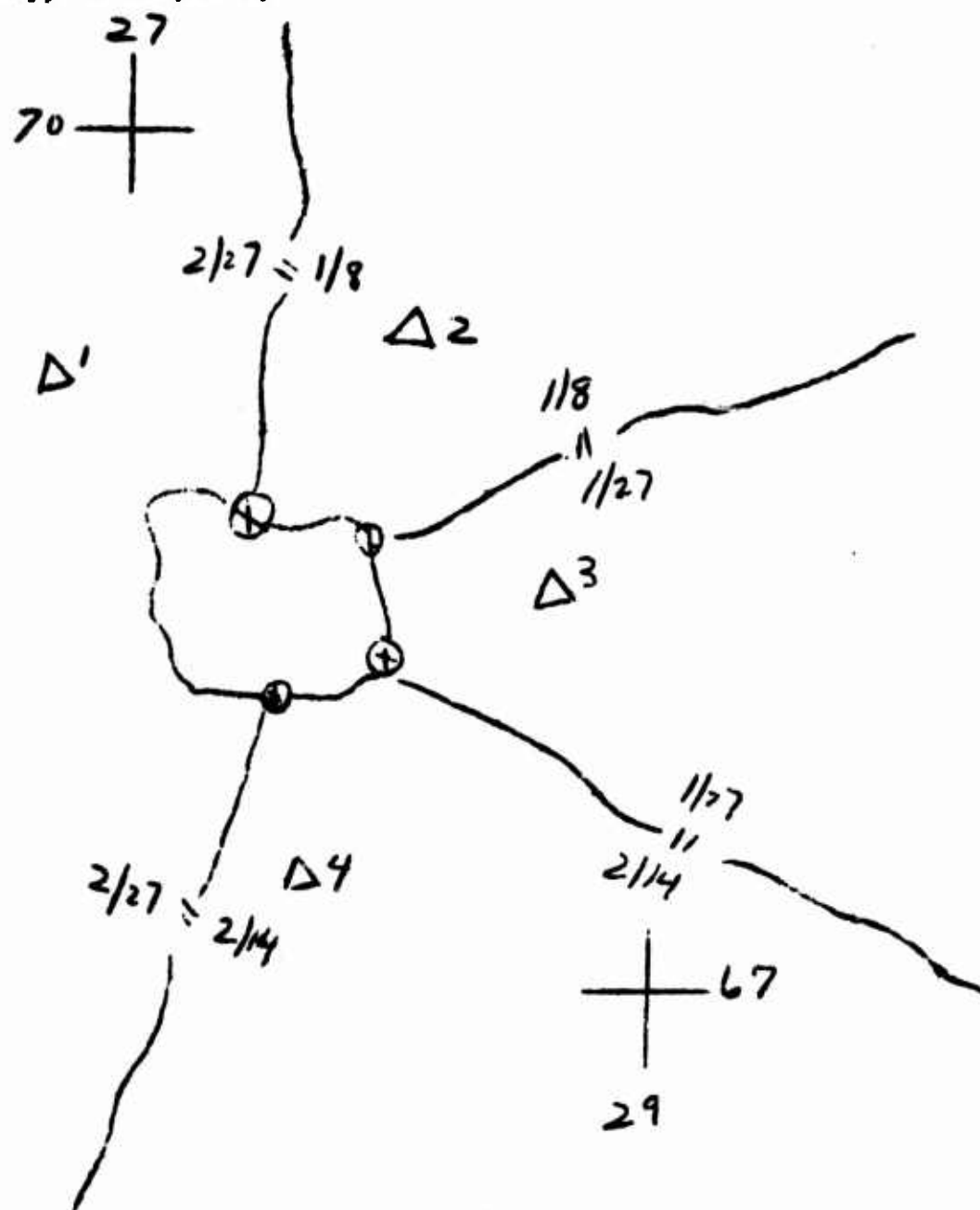


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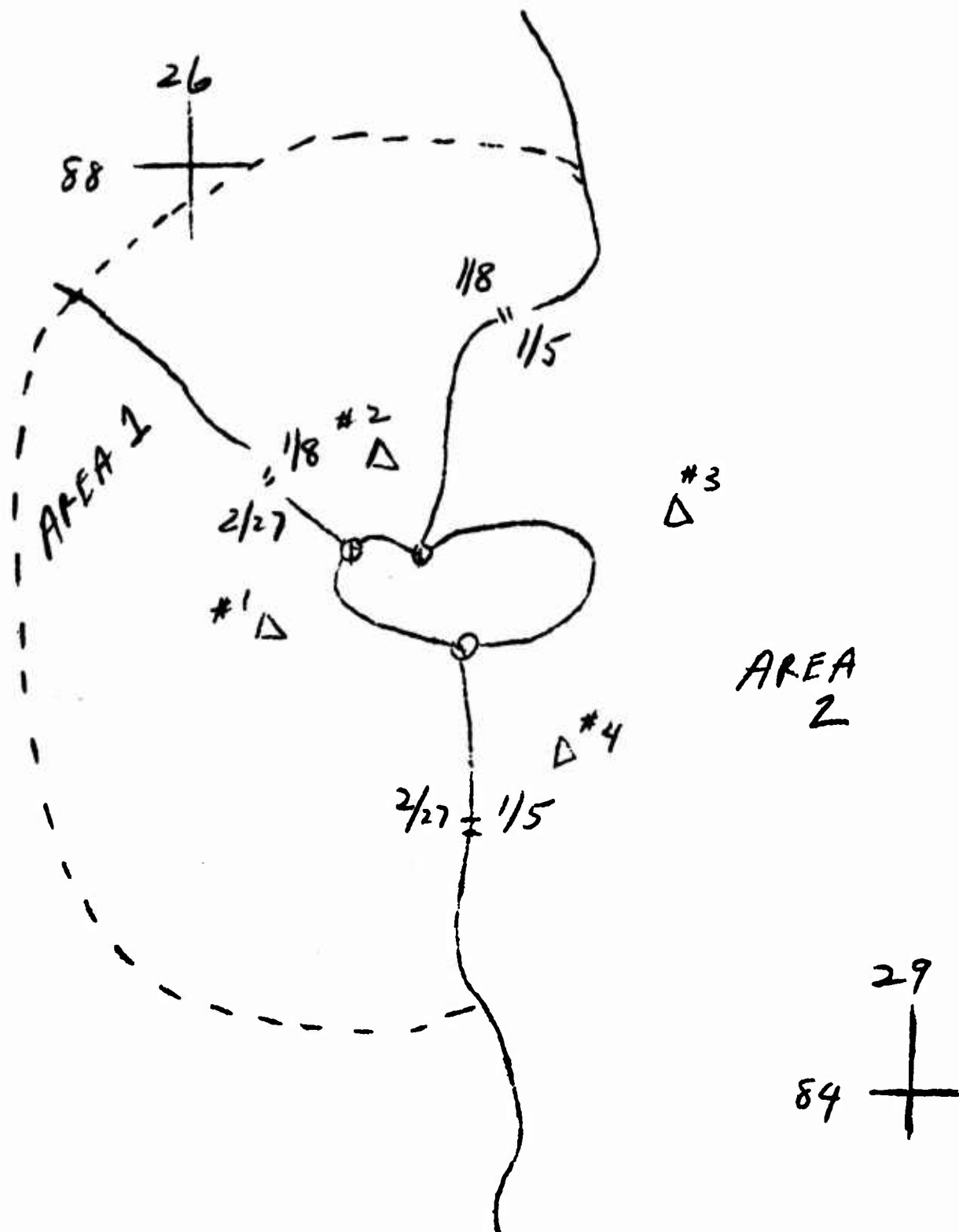
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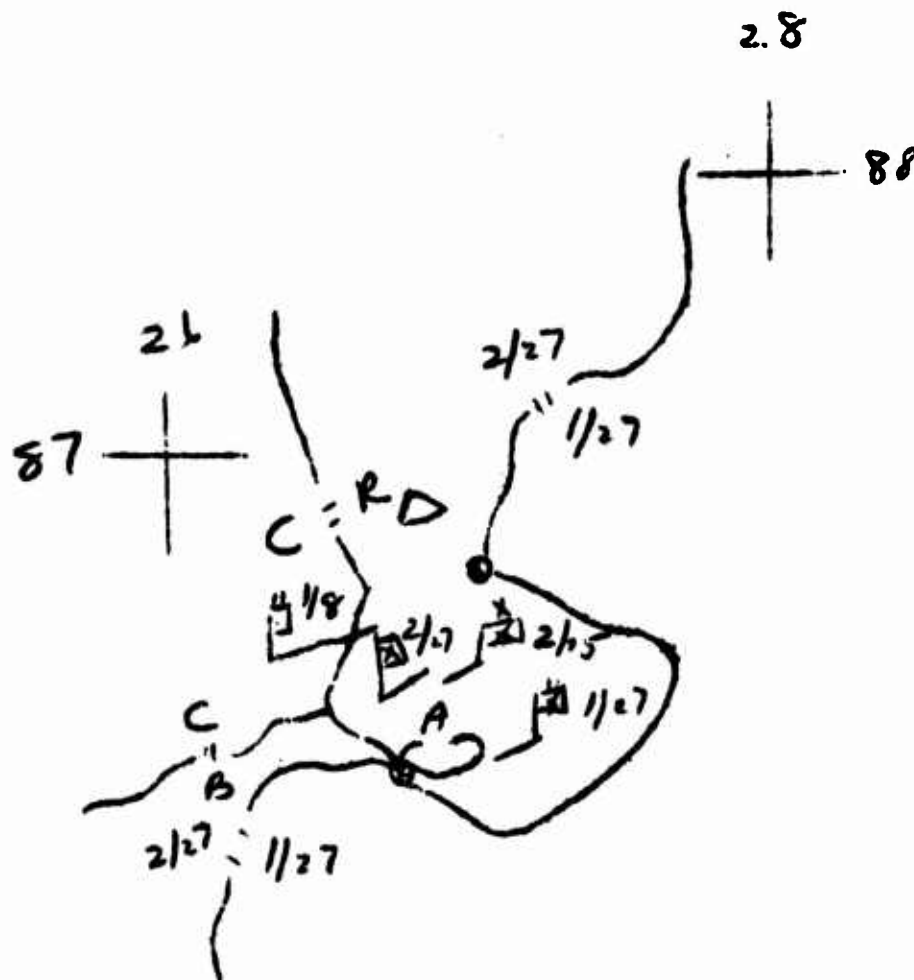
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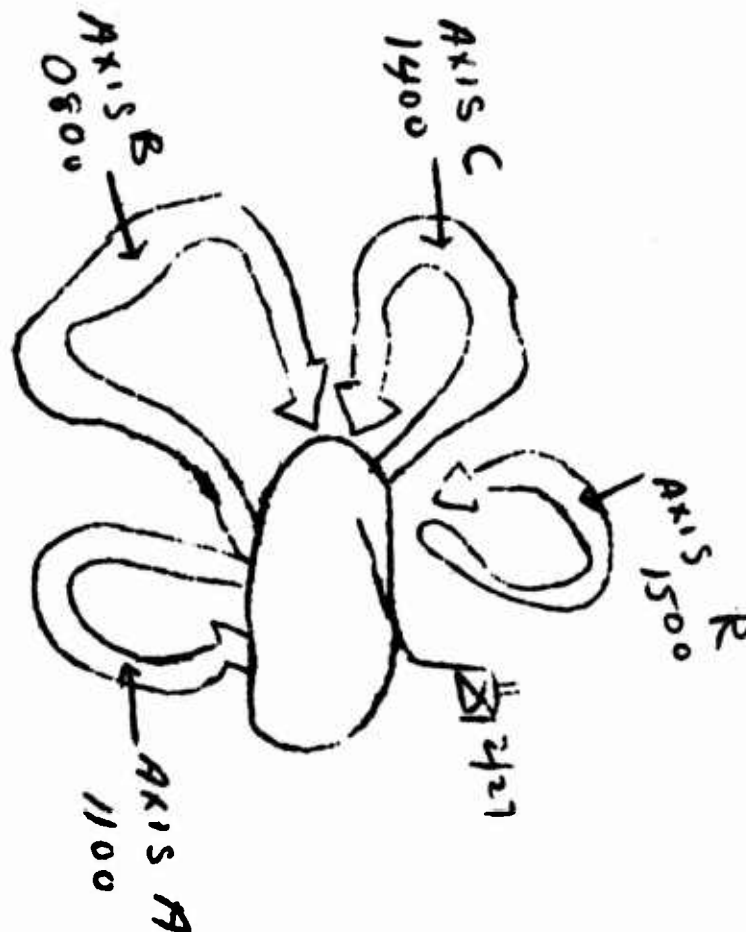


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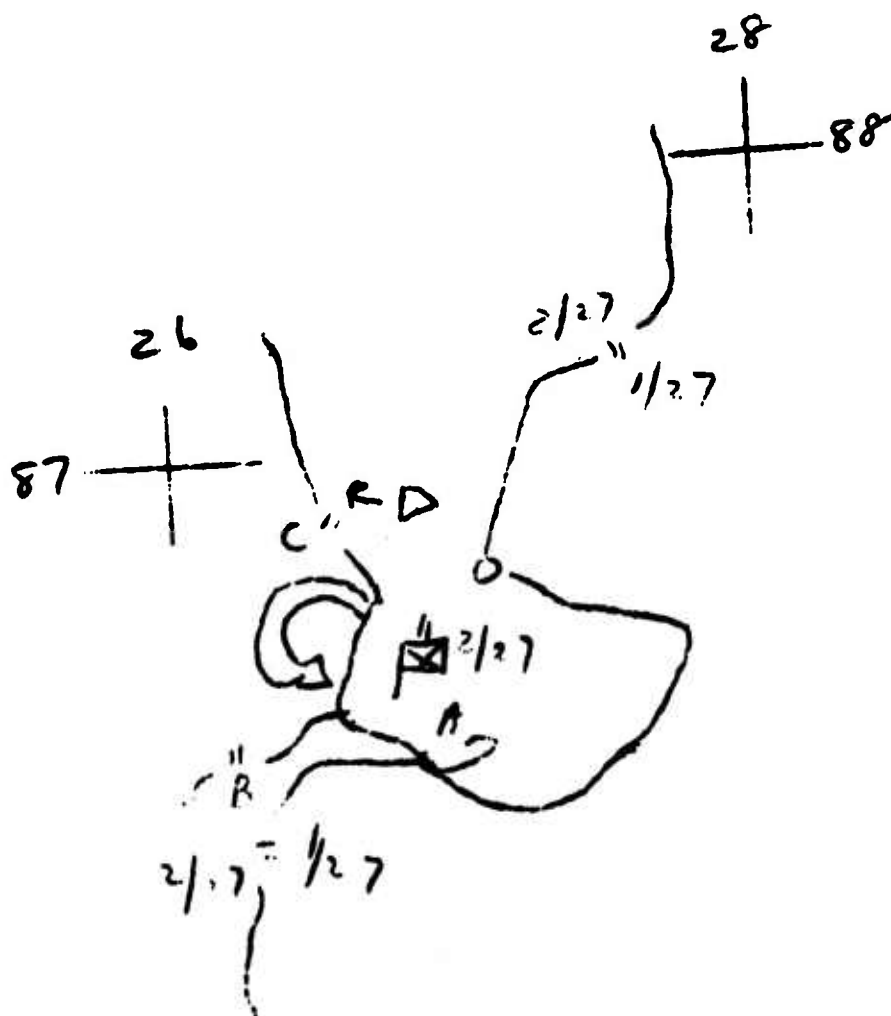


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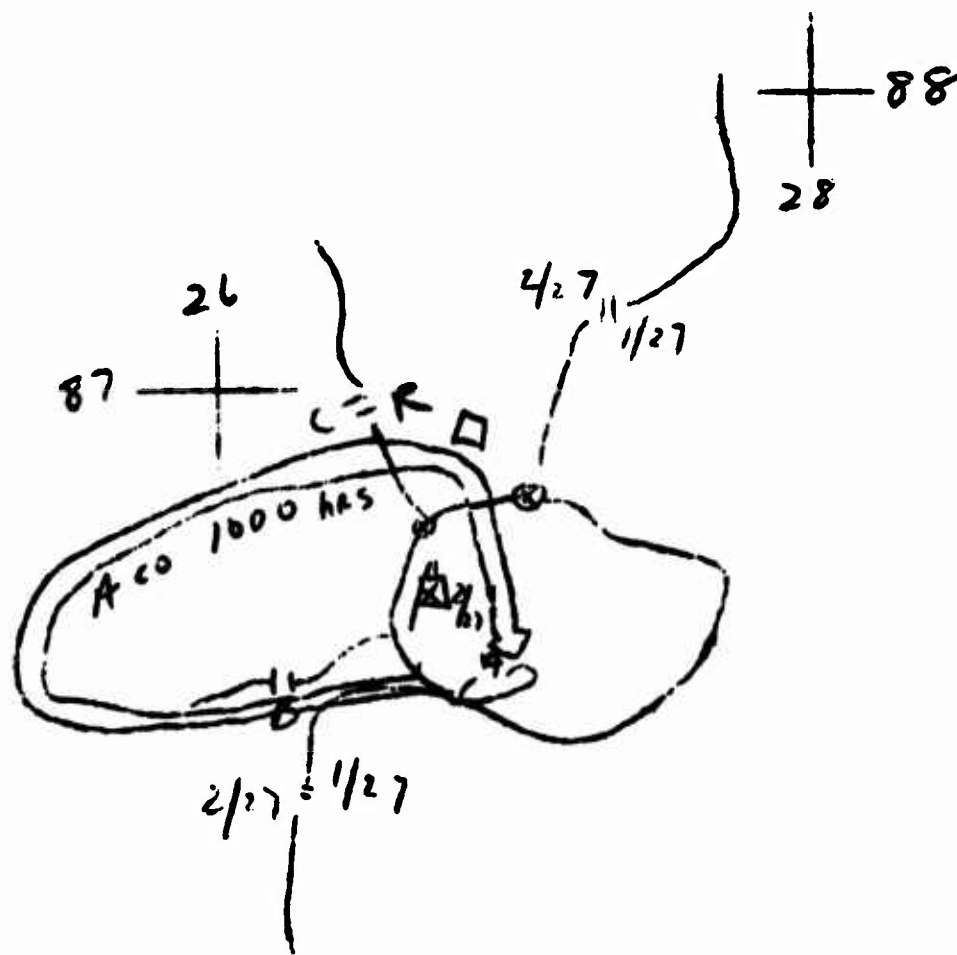
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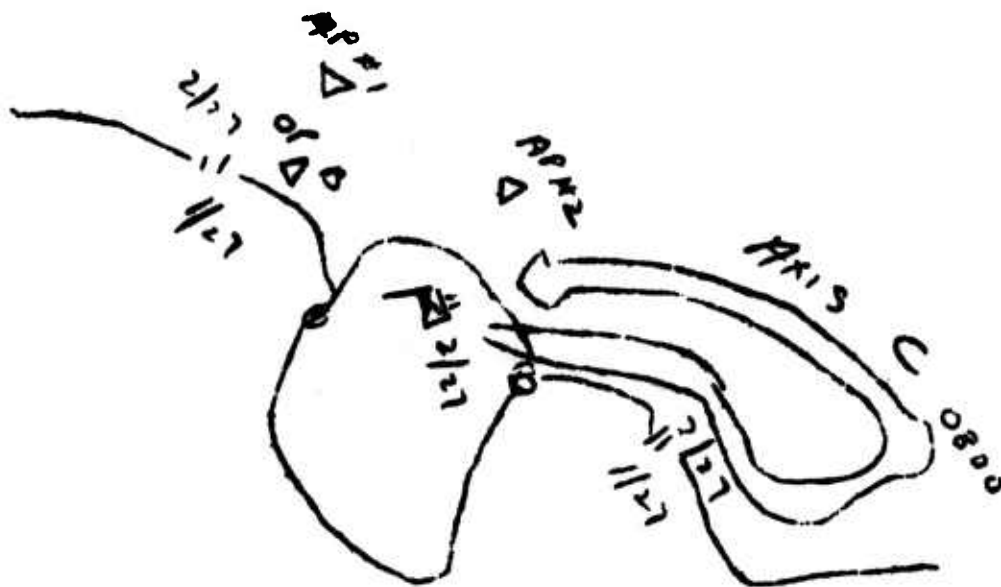
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STATES

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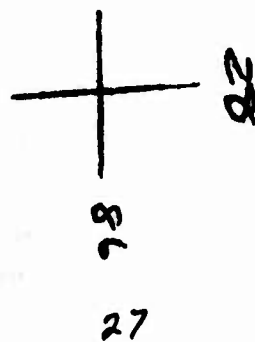
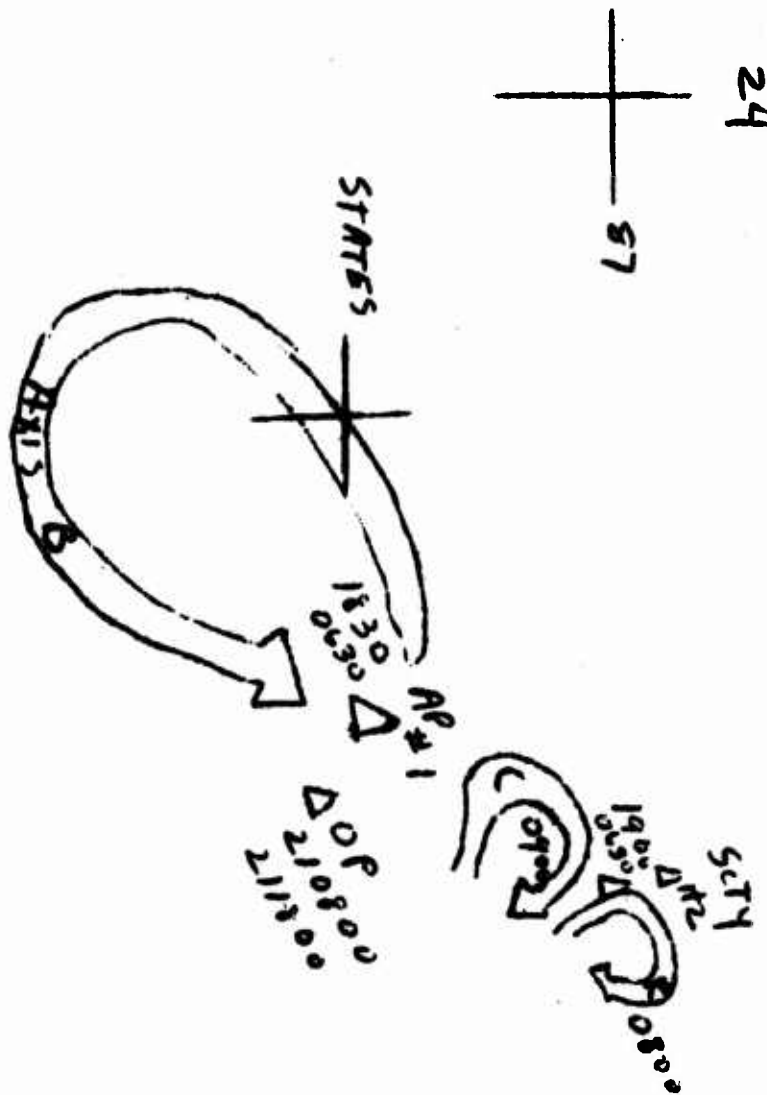
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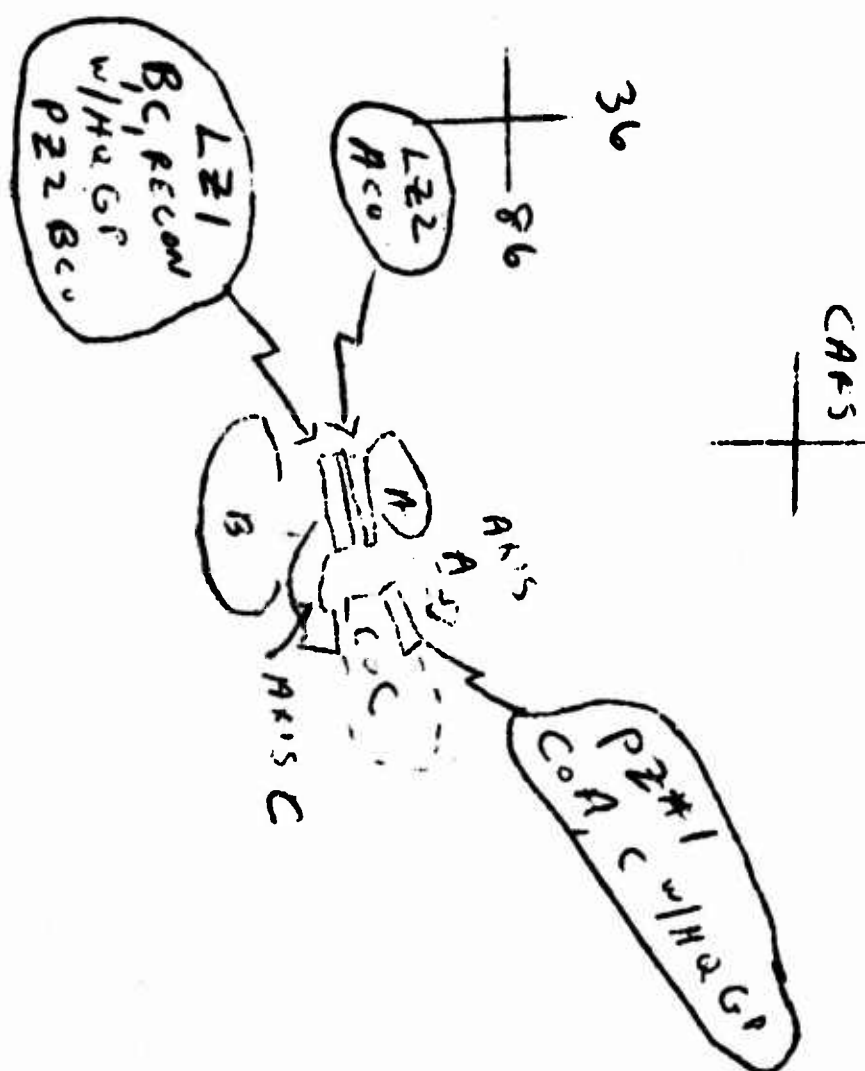
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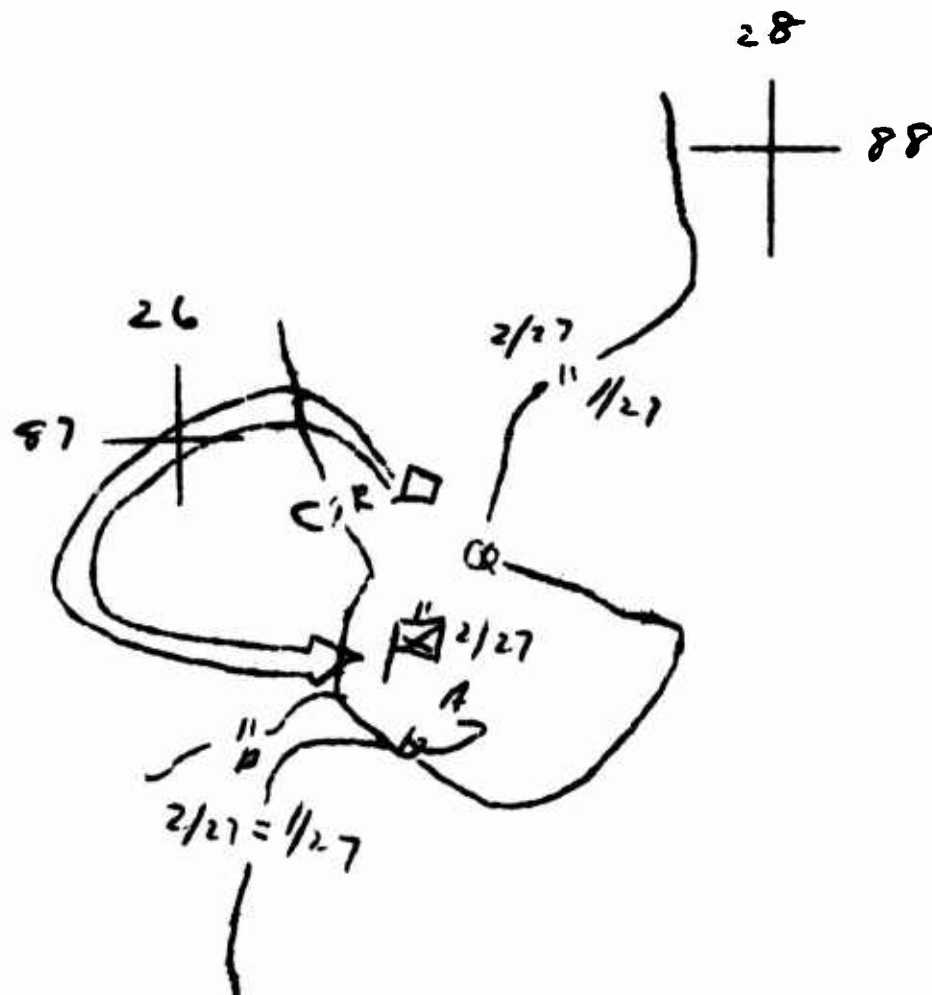


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Annex A, Appendix 12
23 November 1966
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Annex B to Combat Operations After Action Report (Operation ATTLEBORO)

List of Wounded In Action

Name	Company	Type of Wound
1. Reid, Ronald E	HHC	GSW (L) knee
2. Linder, Roydon F	HHC	GSW abdomen
3. Hips, Dee Lambert C	A	GSW (R) foot
4. Holloman, Thomas Jr	A	FW (R) ear
5. Houser, James E	A	GSW chest
6. Wade, Robert C	A	Bowder burns face & eye lids
7. Jimenez, Domingo	A	Contusion back
8. June, James L	A	FW hip & legs
9. Stevens, Richard A	A	FW thumb & middle finger (L) hand, neck
10. Rogers, James T	A	FW (R) lower leg
11. Price, David B	A	FW lower back
12. Lopez, Ernest R	A	GSW (B) legs
13. Cox, John I	A	FW (L) side (R) arm
14. Dilliplane, Robert	A	Injured knee (R)
15. Mark, Robert	A	GSW back
16. Lynch, John H	A	GSW (L) knee
17. Goshorn, Max F	A	GSW (L) buttocks
18. Duglosh, Allan C	A	GSW back
19. Shull, Jesse E	A	FW chest & back
20. Honhson, James E	A	GSW (L) thigh
21. Weigand, Ronald T	A	FW buttock (L) arm
22. Anthony, Terrance L	A	GSW chest
23. Foley, Robert F	A	FW (L) side
24. Graves, Harold K Jr	A	FW (R) elbow
25. Webb, Carlton	C	Diagnosis
26. Evson, Edwin T	C	FW (L) check
27. Sciles, James D	C	FW ribs
28. Rivers, Geary	C	FW (L) leg
29. Conners, Thomas J	C	GSW T & T (L) shoulder
30. Wehe, Richard A	C	MS/W (R) upper arm
31. Williams, James T	C	FW (L) shoulder
32. Howard, David J	C	FW (L) lower leg
33. Brown, Charlie L Jr	C	Contusion (R) knee
34. Harrell, Williams D	C	GSW chest (R) arm
35. Johnson, William T	C	FW (L) leg
36. Vargas Rodriguez, Emer	C	GSW (R) cheek
37. Mandfold, Larry D	C	GSW (L) arm
38. Williamson, James D	C	GSW ankle
39. Koebner, Donald G	C	FW (R) forearm, fingers (R) hand
40. Hobson, Roy H	C	FW chest
41. Perez, Alphonse	C	Lac forehead
42. Smelser, Carl D	C	FW lower (R) abdomen
43. Erlandsen, Allan W	C	FW back
44. Murchison, Ray G	C	MSL (R) shoulder
45. Pruitt, Roy W	C	FW (L) foot
46. Montgomery, Donald A	C	FW buttock
47. Vigel, Gene D	O	GSW (L) arm

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Annex B to Combat Operations After Action Report (Operation ATTLEBORO)

List Of Killed In Action

Name	Company	Type of Wound
1. Althoff, Rodney	HHC	Pent: Wounds head
2. Barott, William C	HHC	GSW head, chest & stomach
3. Caniff, John R	HHC	GSW head
4. Dund, Harry D	HHC	FW ant: chest
5. Millens, Frederick	HHC	GSW chest
6. Spangler, Richard A	HHC	GSW chest
7. Denman, William L	A	Milt GSW
8. Elswick, Lex	A	Milt GSW
9. Hutton, Earl D	A	GSW body
10. Blewett, Roy R	A	GSW head
11. Stoll, George G	A	GSW head
12. Russell, Lynn J	A	FW neck
13. Torres, Fernando L Jr	A	GSW ponds: head
14. Taylor, Robert E	A	GSW pent: chest
15. Winters, Gene T	A	GSW neck
16. Thomas, Aaron L	A	GSW chest
17. Perrault, Alan J	A	Depressed skull
18. Walker, Artie D	A	GSW chest
19. Vest, Robert L	A	GSW chest
20. Adams, Robert L Jr	C	GSW head
21. Barker, Howard C	C	Depressed skull, burns entire body
22. Besson, Lawrence E	C	Pent: wounds stomach
23. Currier, Gerald F	C	FW posterior skull
24. Fontanes-Veiez Jose	C	Wounds back
25. Perez-Cruz, Luis A	C	Pent: wounds stomach, (L) shoulder
26. Young, Bobby	C	Pent: wound neck
27. Wright, James L	C	GSW head